



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 18 October 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
18 OCTOBER 1968

1. Panama

There has been nothing new reported overnight on the question of Arias' leaving the Canal Zone. Panama City is quiet.

2. Czechoslovakia

There is growing concern in Czech party circles that pro-Soviet conservatives are about to make a bid for power. The party's weekly journal, for instance, yesterday attacked "discredited or evidently incompetent" people who are trying to make a comeback. The journal warned that Czechoslovakia must either stick with Dubcek's policies or face a return to Stalinism. Dubcek, meanwhile, remained well in the background during Kosygin's stay in Prague.

3. France

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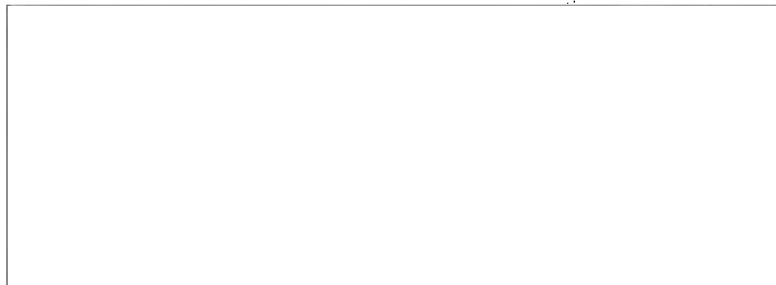
4. Communist China

The messy business of putting the Communist Party back together again has become the central issue in China. The big questions now are who is to be recruited, who is to be promoted, and who is to be purged. Until the leadership is able to control the infighting, however, progress toward rebuilding will be slow indeed.

5. South Korea

President Pak has expanded his private informant network both in the military and in the civilian government. He has also re-established an army security command with primary responsibility to guard against coup plotting. These moves look like the first steps to discourage opposition to Pak's running for a third term in 1971. Pak still has to get the two-term limitation amended out of the constitution, and much of the officer corps may fight this.

6. Nigeria - Soviet Union



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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Le Duc Tho Arrives in Hanoi: Le Duc Tho completed his trip from Paris to Hanoi on Thursday.

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Nhan Dan Line is Tough: An authoritative "Commentator" article in the North Vietnamese party daily on 17 October takes the usual unyielding line on the Paris talks. All blame for the "stalemate" is heaped on the US for refusing to stop the bombing. The concept of reciprocity is firmly rejected, and in two places the article scores President Johnson for calling on North Vietnam to "meet the minimal requirements of fairness" by exercising military restraint.

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Pro-Hanoi Meetings in Paris: The French Interior Ministry has turned down the Foreign Ministry's request that pro-Hanoi meetings scheduled for this weekend in Paris be banned. [REDACTED] The US Embassy has been informed that the meetings will

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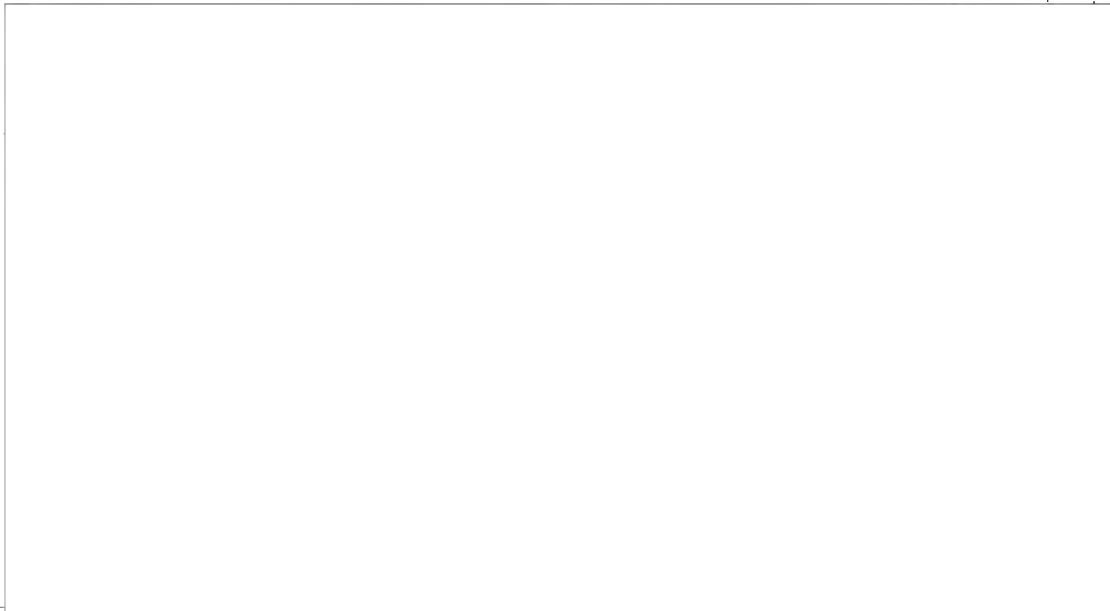
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be held inside a building and admission will be by invitation only. (Presumably, therefore, they will not technically be "public.") A Foreign Ministry official was clearly embarrassed by the decision, but he said it had been made at a "very high level" and nothing more could be done about it.

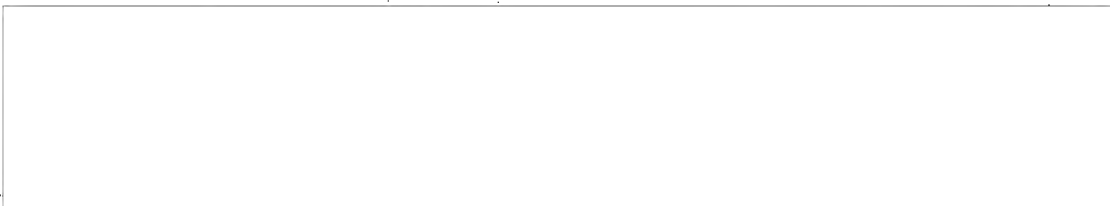
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Burchett to Make "Documentary": Wilfred Burchett's current trip to Hanoi apparently has to do with a "documentary" for the Russell War Crimes Tribunal. The film is to "denounce the myth" of the partial bombing halt.



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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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